

Austria, while at the same time he was making protestations of fidelity to his engagements with Napoleon.<sup>1</sup>

When first informed of Murat's treason by the Viceroy the Emperor refused to believe it. "No," he exclaimed to those about him, "it cannot be! Murat, to whom I have given my sister! Murat, to whom I have given a throne! Eugene must be misinformed. It is impossible that Murat has declared himself against me!" It was, however, not only possible but true. Gradually throwing aside the dissimulation beneath which he had concealed his designs, Murat seemed inclined to renew the policy of Italy during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, when the art of deceiving was deemed by the Italian Governments the most sublime effort of genius. Without any declaration of war, Murat ordered the Neapolitan General who occupied Rome to assume the supreme command in the Roman States, and to take possession of the

<sup>1</sup> Joachim was in treaty at the same time with England, France, Austria, and the Viceroy of Italy, thinking by such means the better to conceal from them his true designs, if indeed he really had any fixed designs. The primary cause of all Joachim's aberrations was the extraordinary conduct pursued by Napoleon towards him, who one day treated him as a King, and the next scarcely showed him the respect due to his former *aide de camp*. Joachim wrote to the Emperor that he had 30,000 men ready to support their common cause. Napoleon answered that the 30,000 men were to be sent to the banks of the To, where they were to await his further orders. This notification reached the King whilst he was visiting Pompeii with the Queen. Murat tore the letter in pieces, threw it on the ground, stamped upon it, then gathering up the fragments he returned in haste to Naples and assembled his Ministers, to whom he said, "Gentlemen, the Emperor uses me in the most unwarrantable manner, and treats me with no more regard than if I were a Corporal." If, instead of acting in this cavalier manner, the Emperor had excited the self-love of Joachim by his usual praise, and put him at the head of all the Italians as well as of the French, then commanded by the Viceroy, to whom he might have given some other charge, the heroic King of Naples would have startled Vienna with an army of 100,000 men! But such fortune was not in store either for Italy or for France, inordinate ambition having already damped the genius of Napoleon. The year before the Emperor, in a remarkable order of the day, had vaunted Prince Eugene to the skies at the expense of Joachim, and now he left these two rivals in Italy, where their mutual jealousy paralyzed the power of almost 150,000 men obtained out of the whole Peninsula, and of about 80,000 Frenchmen stationed in Lombardy. The above-mentioned force under the command of an able general might have entirely changed the destiny of the Empire of France! (*Memoirs of General Pepe*, vol. i. p. 319: Bentley, 1846).

On learning the loss of the battle of "Waterloo, Murat exclaimed to his principal equerry, the Duke of Boccaromana, "Had I led the cavalry the battle would have been won." The same opinion was expressed by Napoleon at St. Helena, and many years later at Paris I heard General Flaxo assert a similar conviction (*Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 123).